

On the Convention Bill, in the House of Commons, January 17th, 1861.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I trust that I enter upon the discussion of the Bill now before the Committee, with a due appreciation of the circumstances by which we are surrounded, and properly impressed with the importance which should be attached to the question now under consideration.

After listening to the able and eloquent speeches of gentlemen on both sides of this question, it is with great diffidence—inexperienced as I am in Legislation—that I undertake to express the opinions which I, and a large majority of the people who have honored me with a seat in this body, entertain upon the momentous questions, which are now agitating the people of this great Nation. No love of display—no impulse of ambition nor of vanity—nothing but the true, faithful and abiding love for my country, and a sense of the duty which I owe to the patriotic and generous constituency which I have the honor, in part, to represent upon this floor, could influence or induce me to participate in this debate. But when I remember our glorious past experience and see the troubles and dangers which overshadow and encompass our present—and look forth into our shadowy future, with so few rays of hope to cheer, I cannot sit silently by and see our “old ship of State” precipitated upon the breakers without raising my voice to prevent it, and ward her off.

The Bill before the Committee proposes the calling of a Convention of the people, to consult concerning our relations with the Federal Government—a question which is new to me, and I presume, equally new to every American citizen. This is the eighty-fifth year of our National Independence, and never before have we been called upon to consult upon such a question. Is it not then, reasonable, that every enquiring mind, every American citizen, in times like these, living under the same Government, the same Constitution and the same laws, as we ever have, to ask the question “why should we consult together *now* and act concerning our relations with the Federal Government?”

I am opposed to the Bill, because I do not believe that the people of this State desire any Convention for such a purpose as provided by this Bill. I am opposed to it, because it does not provide for the submission of the question “*Convention*” or “*no Convention*,” to the people, nor for a ratification by the people, of the acts of such Convention. I am opposed to the amendment offered by the Gentleman from Wayne [Mr. Dortch] because it does not accomplish—in my opinion—the object for which, I presume it was offered, to wit: a ratification by the people, of the acts of the Convention. It provides that those acts *may* be ratified, and I conceive that the word *may*, amounts to nothing in this case. If it was the *bona fide* intention of the gentleman, to have the acts of such Convention ratified by the people, he should have used the word “*shall*,” in the place of the word “*may*,” then it would have been a direct and peremptory command, and no action of said convention would have been valid, until ratified.

I am opposed to the calling of a convention at this time, because I am not an advocate of either the right or the policy of secession, and believe that the call of a convention is the move of secessionists—those who desire to destroy, rather than preserve the Union, and is their next step after arming the State, towards secession. After hearing so many gentlemen upon this floor, declare that they wish a convention, for the purpose of going out of the Union, and some, that after they go, they do not desire to see the Union reconstructed; I cannot believe otherwise than that it is a move of secessionists to carry us out of the Union, and I not being yet ready to go or see North Carolina go out, I am opposed to this Bill; and the only Bill I could be induced to vote for, would be one, providing for the people to say first, whether or not they desire a convention, and likewise for the ratification of its acts by them. I think that the call of a convention, would send to all the States an opinion that we are about to secede, and this false and unjustifiable inference drawn from the acts of our State, a State which has been always noted for her deliberate action and her prudence, I fear would give much strength

to the secession movement in the Cotton States, and induce the Border States to believe that we are deserting them, and cause them to take steps to follow us in secession.

We are told that a convention must be called, because the South has been wronged by the General Government—that our slave property has been depreciated, that a sectional President has been elected; representing a party, whose principles are hostile to the rights and interests of the South. That laws have been passed in nine of the States in the North, prejudicial to slavery and in direct opposition to and nullification of the letter and spirit of our Constitution. I do not stand here to deny, or justify or palliate these things, however disgraceful I deem the truth to be, to our Nation; but I intend to discuss this question fairly, calmly, and impassionately. I shall be open to conviction, and if convinced that I am wrong; I shall most cheerfully concede; but at the same time, I trust that I am speaking to gentlemen, who are, alike open to conviction—who have not come here with opinions formed, and determined to adhere to them in spite of conviction, of reason, and of the best interests of our common country.

I admit that some of our slaves have been spirited away—that abolition emissaries have been in our midst, endeavoring to corrupt and incite to insurrection, the slaves in our midst—that the facts set forth before the people in the public prints, concerning the Brown raid in Virginia, are true, that nine of the Northern States have passed laws, nullifying the Fugitive Slave Law and refusing to recognize any right of property in slaves—that many Northern men, both in Congress and out, in conventions and public meetings, and in the pulpits, have said and done all in their power, to abolish slavery and to trample upon the rights of the South; that a Northern sectional candidate, entertaining the principles of the Republican party, has been elected to fill the chief office of our Nation; that Northern men have attempted to legislate slavery out of the District of Columbia and of all the territories. I admit that all these acts have been done by Northern States and Northern men—that these acts were in direct and open violation of the Constitution of the Nation, at variance with the rights and interests of the South, and sufficient to arouse the spirit of every Southern man and of every true patriot. These wrongs cannot be denied, justified, or palliated, and far be it from me to attempt it, even if I had the inclination. Born and educated under the auspices of the institution of slavery, and to believe in the Holy Bible, which sanctions this institution, I cannot here refrain from expressing my indignation on account of the wrongs which the high-minded and chivalrous people of the South, have suffered in this behalf.

It is said by the friends of this Bill, that the people must consult together about these wrongs, and either determine to submit to them or take steps to redress them—and that in order to redress them, we must secede from the Union. I believe that the question of slavery should be settled now and settled forever, I believe this can be done in the Union and under our Constitution. I do not believe in the right of secession and consider that secession amounts to revolution. It has been said upon this floor that in this Union, there is no final arbiter, to decide Constitutional questions. I am sorry that the gentlemen who made this declaration, is not more familiar with the Constitution under which we have so long and so happily lived, and for his information I will cite him to Art. 3. Sec. 2, of the same, which reads, “The judicial power shall extend to all cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority;—to all cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls—to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction—to controversies to which the United States shall be a party—to controversies between two or more States—between a State and citizens of another State—between citizens of different States—between citizens of the same State claiming lands under grants of different States, and between a State, or the citizens thereof

and foreign State citizens or subjects." And further to Art. 6 Sect. 2, which is: "This Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the Supreme Law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary, notwithstanding." Upon which, Mr. Webster in his celebrated speech in reply to Mr. Hayne, of South Carolina, delivered in Congress, January, 1850, on the resolutions of Mr. Foote, comments as follows: "The people have wisely provided in the Constitution itself, a proper, suitable mode and tribunal for settling questions of Constitutional law. There are in the Constitution, grants of power to Congress, and restrictions on these powers. There are, also, prohibitions on the States.—Some authority, therefore, must necessarily exist, having the ultimate jurisdiction to fix and ascertain the interpretation of these grants, restrictions and prohibitions. The Constitution has itself pointed out, ordained and established that authority. How has it accomplished this great and essential end? By declaring, sir, that 'the Constitution and the laws of the United States, made in pursuance thereof, shall be the supreme law of the land; anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.' This, sir, was the first great step. By this the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the United States is declared. The people so will it. No State law is to be valid which comes in conflict with the Constitution or any law of the United States passed in pursuance of it.—But who shall decide this question of interference? To whom lies the last appeal? This, sir, the Constitution itself, decides also by declaring 'that the judicial power shall extend to all cases arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States.' These two provisions cover the whole ground. They are in truth, the Key-stone of the arch. With these it is a Constitution; without them it is a Confederacy. In pursuance of these clear and express provisions, Congress established, at its very first session, in the judicial act, a mode for carrying them into full effect, and for bringing all questions of Constitutional power, to the final decision of the Supreme Court." (In pursuance of this authority, the Supreme Court decided the famous Dred Scott case, which settled the Fugitive Slave Law.) "It then became a government. It then had the means of self-protection; and but for this, it would, in all probability, have been among the things which are past. Having constituted the government and declared its powers, the people have further said, that since somebody must decide on the extent of these powers, the government shall itself decide, subject always, like other popular governments, to its responsibility to the people."

It is said by some that it is constitutional to interrupt the administration of the Constitution itself in the hands of those who are chosen and sworn to administer it, by the direct interference of the States in virtue of their sovereign capacity. To this I reply in the language of Mr. Webster, "The inherent right in the people, to reform their government, I do not deny; and they have another right, and that is, to resist unconstitutional laws, without overturning the government. The great question is, whose prerogative is it to decide on the constitutionality or the unconstitutionality of the laws? On that, the main debate hinges. The proposition that, in case of a supposed violation of the Constitution by Congress, the States have a Constitutional right to interfere and annul the laws of Congress, is the proposition of the gentleman, [Mr. Hayne] I do not admit. If the gentleman had intended no more than to assert the right of revolution, for justifiable cause, he would have said only, what all agree to. But I cannot conceive that there can be a middle course, between submission to the laws when regularly pronounced Constitutional, and open rebellion, on the other. I say, the right of a State to annul a law of Congress, cannot be maintained on the ground of the unalienable right of man to resist oppression; that is to say, upon the ground of rebellion. I admit that there is an ultimate, violent remedy under the Constitution and in defiance of it, which may be resorted to, when a revolution is to be justified. But I do not admit that under the Constitu-

tion, and in conformity with it, there is any mode in which a State government, as a member of the Union, can interfere and stop the progress of the general government by force of her own laws, under any circumstances whatever. This leads us to inquire into the origin of this government and the source of its power... Whose agent is it? Is it the creature of the State legislatures, or the creature of the people? If the government of the United States, be the agent of the State governments then they may control it, provided they can agree in the manner of controlling it; if it be the agent of the people, then the people alone can control it, restrain it, modify, or reform it. It is observable enough that the doctrine for which the honorable gentleman contends, leads him to the necessity of maintaining, not only that this general government is the creature of the States, but that it is the creature of each of the States severally; so that each may assert the power for itself, of determining whether it acts within the limits of its authority. It is the servant of four, and twenty-masters, of different wills and different purposes, and yet bound to obey, all. This absurdity (for it seems no less) arises from a misconception as to the origin of this government and its true character. It is, the people's Constitution, the people's government; made for the people; made by the people; and answerable to the people. The people of the United States have declared that this Constitution shall be the Supreme law. We must either admit the proposition, or dispute their authority. The States are, unquestionably, sovereign, so far as their sovereignty is not affected by this Supreme law. But the State legislatures as political bodies, however sovereign, are yet, not sovereign over the people. So far as the people have given power to the general government, so far the grant is unquestionably good, and the government holds of the people, and not of the State governments. We are all agents of the same Supreme power, the people."

So far as the people have restrained State sovereignty by the expression of their will, in the Constitution of the United States, so far, it must be admitted, State sovereignty is effectually controlled. I do not contend that it is or ought to be controlled farther.

If the above reasoning be correct and be founded upon true premises, then a State has no Constitutional right to nullify or oppose the Constitution—to secede from the Union, and such act on the part of any State is Revolution, an inherent, inalienable, but not a Constitutional right.

And again, If the above reasoning be correct, then as the Constitution Art. 1. Sec. 8. gives to Congress power "to lay and collect taxes, duties, imports and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States; any attempt on the part of any State to oppose this power, would be an insurrection, within the meaning of the Constitution (for I conceive an insurrection to be a word derived from the Latin verb "Insurgo" "to rise up" and although it has of late in the Southern States, been generally applied to the rising up of slaves against masters, yet no such distinction existed, when the Constitution was framed and adopted.) And the Constitution Art. 1. Sect. 8. clause 15, gives to Congress the power "to provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrection and repel invasion." And these powers if exercised, certainly do, in my humble judgment, amount to coercion. Hence, either the gentleman from New Hanover [Mr. Person] who declares that the Constitution does not give the General Government the power of coercing a State, is mistaken, or I have not drawn correct inferences from those parts of the Constitution above cited. I am willing that my fellow-citizens—the people who made the Constitution shall interpret the meaning of this their creature, for us; if I am wrong it is an honest mistake.

Again, if the people have created the office of President and have prescribed the manner and form for his selection, and a President be elected pursuant thereto, then is he, the legal, Constitutional President of the Nation and no State or States, has a Constitutional right to say that they will not have such a man to rule over them, or to prevent his inauguration. If they attempt to exercise such right, that act is revolutionary, and that, without just cause.

Then if Mr. Lincoln has been regularly elected

compliance with the Constitution, he is the Lawful, Constitutional President of the United States for the next four years, and I propose it as we may, dispise the principles of his party as we may, yet we have not now by the simple act of the people in electing him, just cause for revolution. But we are told that his principles, politically, are antagonistic to the Constitution of the Union, and to the interests of the South. This is true, and without any intention to justify his principles, or him, if he attempts, as President, to carry any one of them into effect; I answer, that the Constitution recognizes no party, neither the political creed of any party nor of any man; and it is said, and has until lately, been believed, that in our country, every man has a right to entertain any opinion he may please; but no matter what opinions, personally or politically, Mr. Lincoln may entertain; if he discharges the duties imposed upon him by the Constitution, impartially and in good faith, to all parties and to all sections, then he shall have done all that any party or any section, can reasonably require of him. If he does not, then Congress should impeach him, and if Congress should refuse so to do, then the people should do their own work in their own way. But not until then, for then and not before, will we have exhausted all Constitutional attempts, and I conceive that revolution is not justifiable in the sight of God, of man, or of Nations, until this is done. The gentleman from Granville, [Mr. Bullock] asks me if I believe that Lincoln will carry out the Constitution in good faith? I answer that I believe all men are actuated by motives of interest if not of honesty—that Lincoln has now reached the highest position in the gift of this mighty Nation—that he now can have no ambition to gratify, no interest to advance, save to do his duty and to deserve the praise and confidence of his fellow-citizens, and if he shall be actuated by such interest and and cherishes one spark of patriotism, he will throw off party shackles, and in this dread crisis, will stand forth as a watchman upon the tower of our liberties, pour oil upon the troubled waters, and exclaim, "Peace, be still." But whether he will or will not be actuated by this interest, and in this way, I, not having an acquaintance with him, cannot decide.

Again, upon the subject of this election, I remark, that if we now have a right to resist Lincoln's inauguration, then by the same reasoning, it must be admitted that the Republicans, four years since, had the same right to resist the inauguration of Mr. Buchanan, for he was elected over Fremont, by a party entertaining different views upon slavery; from theirs; he himself entertaining the same. And so, every defeated party must be admitted to have had, heretofore, and to have hereafter, the right of opposing the authority of the dominant party. If that were true, we would have endless strife, and our government would long since, have crumbled into dust. Hence the more we reason upon this question, the more clearly we see the necessity of standing firm upon the Constitution, for in it is contained all our law and testimony—enough to guarantee all our rights and the redress of all our wrongs.

The election of Lincoln, even supposing it a justifiable cause for revolution, is the act of the sovereign people performed in the manner they have prescribed for themselves, and if they object to it, and revolutionize they thereby stultify themselves, & it would be the people against the people, which is simply ridiculous. It is said by the gentleman from Kewan [Mr. Flemming] "that the general Government, has violated its compact with the States, and that Mr. Webster said that when one party to a compact failed to perform his duty, such failure amounts to a release of the other party from said compact;" in reply to the gentleman, I will inform him that Mr. Webster also said "when the gentleman says the Constitution is a compact between the States, he uses language exactly applicable to the old confederation. He speaks as if he were in Congress before 1789. He describes fully that old state of things then existing. The confederation was, in strictness, a compact; the States, as States, were parties to it. We had no other General Government. But that was found inefficient and inadequate to the public exigencies. The people were not satisfied with it, and undertook to establish a better. They undertook to form a General Government which should stand on a new basis—not a

States, but a Constitution; a popular government, founded upon popular election, directly responsible to the people themselves, and divided into branches, with prescribed limits of power, and prescribed duties. They ordained such a government; they gave it the name of a Constitution, & a Charter; they established a distribution of power between this, their general government, and their several State governments. When they shall become dissatisfied with this distribution, they can alter it. Their own power over their own instrument remains. But until they shall alter it, their will must stand, and is equally binding on the general government, and on the States." Then let the gentleman stand, condemned by his own authority.

But it is said that the General Government has wronged the South and is not guiltless. I ask how, when? Can any one cite a single instance? I have been listening to gentlemen occupying this position, for several days, and no one has cited one. It is true they have given us the origin and history of the Republican party—they tell us that Northern men have been educated to believe as conscientiously that slavery is a moral evil, and wrong, as we believe it is right—that they preach against it, that they send emissaries out, in the midst, to incite our slaves to insurrection, and entice them away from us, that they have made raids upon us, and killed our citizens, burned our homes, poisoned our wells, in parts of the South, and seem determined that they will ruin us, or our institution of slavery. This, no one can deny; but these acts have been committed by private individuals, without any knowledge, aid or abettance, on the part of the Federal Government; their crime cannot be shuffed upon the Government. They ought to have been punished, and all who have been caught, were punished. I am sure we have the most stringent laws upon this subject, and I am sure, they have been enforced, and cannot will be again, and as often as violated. But again it is said, that Northern States have passed laws nullifying the Fugitive Slave Law, and in violation of the Federal Constitution. This cannot be denied, and ought not to be submitted to; but this is an offence committed by those States against the government and not of the government against the South. *ex. vi. term.* we are obliged to admit that the Federal Government is guiltless as far as the passage of those nullification laws is concerned, but the President and Congress, which have suffered these laws to remain upon the statute books of many States is in open violation of the Constitution; they have remiss in their duty, have not administered the government as they were sworn to do—and when they have suffered these nullification laws to be enforced to prevent the execution of the Fugitive Slave Law, they ever have, in that they have brought guilt upon the General Government, to the detriment of the South. But this, if I mistake not, has never been done; and if so, it must have been, when the people of the South were represented in the office of President and in Congress, by men holding the same political opinions as a majority of them did—men for whom they had voted, and whom they cannot now consistently impeach for any lack or failure of duty. How could the South have been injured by the General Government, when all the time, we have been represented, and our government has been administered by men who held the same political principles with a large majority of the people of the South—by members of the National Democratic party? And yet we see the members of this party, in the South, the men who are making all this cry against the General Government, saying that we have been wronged by it, and that we must secede from it, before we can have our rights. I very much fear that they are actuated by the principle of "true or man," and that all this disturbance has been commenced, because that party has been deprived of the spoils of office. It is shown that the election of Lincoln—and of the alleged causes for disunion—is not a cause to justify secession or revolution, and if it were, it was against the sovereign people, and not a wrong committed by the South against the South. Then after all this, after all this comes back, where and when and how, has the South ever wronged the South? And with no more than this—There is no one offended, from this South, by any just cause for revolution held in the arms of the South—that only a small number of men, who are not

the South, is it not the truth between individuals that when one is trespassed upon, he shall use all gentle and reasonable means, to be rid of the trespasser or redress his wrongs: before he is authorized to use any force? Why does not the same rule apply to States and Nations? I assert it does, and by this rule or any other just rules, I hold that the South even if she has been wronged by the Federal Government—which I deny—has no cause to revolutionize, because, we have never demanded of the Government, any right or the redress of any wrong. The gentleman from Rowan admits that the Constitution, if carried out in good faith, is a sufficient guaranty for the South, and every one must admit this. If this be true, then the causes which have existed so long, under the rule of Democratic rulers—with this same Constitution to carry out, are brought forward with bad grace by those who admit that this Constitution is a sufficient guaranty, if carried out in good faith, and who have voted for and done all in their power to put into office, the very men, who they now allege, have not carried out this Constitution in good faith—the very men who they say have in the capacity of the Federal Government; wronged the South, and thereby giving us a just cause for revolution.

"O wad some power, the giftie gie us,

To see oursel' as others see us," &c.

If these causes were sufficient to justify us in a revolution, why have we waited so long—waited until the statute of limitations, would have barred an action, if the difficulty had been existing between man and man? I shrewdly suspect, sir, that these causes would never have been mentioned, had the same party continued in office; and that no demand has been made by those holding these opinions, upon the government, because they knew, that no such wrong had been committed, that no right had been withheld or encroached upon; and if so, that the government would make all honorable remedy; and then the grand *Air Castle* of a great Southern Confederacy, erected by ambitious or disappointed politicians South, would pass away "like the baseless fabric of a vision."

These cannot by any rule, in the eyes of any disinterested person, be considered causes sufficient to justify a revolution, and if not, then we have a remedy under the Constitution, and that too, without seceding from, or dissolving, the Union. It has guaranteed to us, all the rights we have under it, and has provided a manner and means of securing them, and of redressing all our wrongs, and as soon as Mr. Lincoln or any other President—of whatever party or section he may be—shall by omission or commission, refuse to enforce and defend the rights and redress the wrongs of the South; and Congress shall refuse or fail to aid us; then I will stand forth, with a united South, in a common cause, for the rights of the South. I think that if those sticklers for Southern rights, had been more true to the interests of the South, and were really desirous of having the Constitution carried out in good faith, had not been such anticipators of future grievances, that the investigation of the Covode Committee, furnished an ample cause for them to manifest their attachment to the Government and the people living under it. But we hear nothing of those facts, in their long category of causes justifying a revolution.

We are told by some, that we will secede peaceably, and that they will put in their hats, every drop of blood that shall be spilled by secession. If this be true, then we certainly will not secede for the purpose of redressing past wrongs or receiving value for our runaway slaves. It certainly cannot be to gratify a spirit of revenge, for no high-minded, chivalrous people, as those of the South, would stoop so low as to be actuated by such a motive.

Then the only reason for Secession must be, for security against these encroachments and wrongs in the future. Now my countrymen before you take this leap in the dark, I pray you, consider well the chances, for I tell you, it is a long and important leap, and when once taken, it will be hard, hard indeed, to reach your original stand point. If the Union be dissolved—which may God avert—the boundary line between a Northern and Southern Confederacy, must run with the Ohio and Potomac Rivers—then our runaway negroes will only have to cross a river, to get into a foreign and hostile jurisdiction. But the members of a treaty for restoring

fugitive slaves. I hope no gentleman will "lay the flattering unction to his soul," that a Southern Confederacy would ever be able to effect such a treaty with a Northern Confederacy—then in half a night, any number of slaves may go over and the same process may continue forever—then we must either submit or always be at war with the North—a border warfare would be continually kept up, North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky would—as Yancey declared—became "the break waters of the cotton States, to protect the Southern from the Northern Confederacy, would lose all the negroes, receive all the Abolition Emisseries, fight all the battles, pay for carrying them on and receive no profit, in other words, would become "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for a people whose interests are not ours, but in part. Will not the conservative, patriotic people of North Carolina consider these facts, before they consent, or suffer themselves to be driven, to take such "a leap in the dark?" We are told that the interest and the cause of South Carolina, is the interest and cause of the entire South. In this, I beg leave to differ. I did not come here for the purpose of casting reproaches upon, or of criminating the course of South Carolina—She is a fellow Sister and for her I have the same sympathy that I would entertain for a sister or brother in the flesh, who had by a rash act, fallen into disrepute and danger. I could not injure her, if I would; and would not, if I could—God knows, she has injured herself enough, but I mention her name, her acts and condition, only to compare them with what our fate will be, if we shall follow her unfortunate lead.

But a few months since, her people were prosperous and happy, in health and surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries of life, their treasury full, their credit good and peace and plenty smiling before them.—They seceded from the Union of their fathers—they "set up for themselves," and now, let the history of the present tell their sad tale.

Their troops, composed mostly of men, unaccustomed to the hardships and exposures of camp-life, have sickened and many of them died—they have proved by their brief, but sad experience, that more treasure is required to erect and maintain an independent government than to carry on an individual State—their money has been expended, they have sent Commissioners to the North, for the purpose of borrowing, those Commissioners have returned without the money; thus they see their credit gone, and their State or Nation, slighted and disgraced, by their avowed enemies, in the eyes of the world. Hence they have been compelled to make a revenue for the maintenance of their government, by resorting to a *forced loan*, and in that forced loan, is a levy of sixteen dollars upon every negro. Gentlemen try to dodge this, by saying that this is not a *tax*—they may call it by whatever fair name they choose yet it has to be paid by the slave owner, to the government, upon every slave he owns, and that is not, nor can it be denied. Then why such quibbling about it? It is to destroy the force of such an argument. The gentleman from Mocklenburg, says that there is no such *tax* placed upon negroes there, because he has a brother living there; but upon being asked "if a levy to that amount has not been made," he refuses to answer. "Drowning men will catch at straws." Not only has their public credit gone, but since their secession, one of their citizens, wrote to a merchant North, to send him three hundred barrels of flour, stating that he would send the money upon the receipt of the flour. He was answered, that when the money was received, the flour would be forwarded, and not before. Can South Carolina stand this? Where is the man in his senses that will say yes?—These are no hatched up tales to frighten the timid and credulous, but they are all published in the public prints and have not been denied.

Then it such are the consequences already, of secession, to South Carolina, what would be the consequences to us? Are we richer than they, are our men stouter than theirs, can we expect more favors at the hands of an enemy, than they? Certainly not. If we secede, we do it, with a debt of about ten millions of dollars upon our shoulders, in addition to three hundred thousand dollars recently appropriated, for the purpose of arming the State, which is not half enough, if we need any arms—beside the twenty per cent discount, which we

lose by paying for these arms in State bonds, at when they are selling at twenty or eighteen per cent. discount, and the interest on said three hundred thousand dollars, until the mency is paid. If we levy a forced loan on our negro owners we must remember that our Constitution reads "Capitation tax shall be equal upon all persons subject to the same" that when such tax is laid, it falls upon the head of every white man, as well those who have no slaves, as upon those who have. Do you think the non-slaveholders will bear this? Can they bear it? Can any one in our State bear it, even if they are disposed to do so? Are our taxes not now, as high as most of the taxpayers can endure? Have they not been increased this session of the Legislature three hundred thousand dollars, and is not this (in addition to the millions already due or soon to be) to be levied and paid, even if we remain in the Union and have no war?

In addition to the above reasons, assigned for a cause why we should not follow the example of South Carolina, I will assign another, in a different connection, which also, proves that her cause is not our cause, and her interest not our interest.

Their cause is not ours, because when Mr. Memminger who had been appointed to draft a Declaration of Independence, reported, and set forth in his declaration, a clause relative to the Fugitive Slave Law. Mr. Gregg, a member of the Convention, stated "that they cared nothing about that law, that they had never lost any slaves and never expected to, and that they desired something about the Tariff." The same gentleman also stated at another time, that they had now accomplished that which they had been endeavoring to do, for the last forty years. If these declarations be true, and they have not been denied, then their cause is not ours, nor that of the South, and we are forced to believe that they have not seeded for the causes which they have *openly* proclaimed, but on account of some matter in which she alone is interested—perhaps for the gratification of malice which she has harbored against the General Government, since the days of nullification. It is very certain that the Personal Liberty Laws had not been passed in any Northern State forty years ago, nor has that length of time elapsed, since the election of Lincoln. Their interest is not ours, because, theirs is a Cotton State—ours is not, and we do not wake half enough to supply our own home demand. We have been told by the gentleman from Cumberland [Mr. Wright] that "*Cotton is king*," (and it certainly would be in a Southern Confederacy) then North Carolina, not having sufficient of this staple to keep pace with the other States, and to command the respect of *King Cotton*, we, of course, would become the subjects, if not the abject slaves of this potent king.

Besides, South Carolina, has seen with regret, the decrease in the population of Charleston, and that its prosperity is wavering—she thinks that if this Union is dissolved and a Southern Confederacy formed, then Charleston will be the great Commercial Emporium of the South and her fortune will be made.

Then I think we are justified in saying, that the interest of South Carolina is not our interest, or the interest of the Border States, nor her cause their cause. Then if the cause and interest of South Carolina, are not the cause and interest of our State, she has acted in bad faith toward us and the other Southern States, in so telling us and thereby attempting to entice us into the same difficulties and dangers that she now experiences. Like the fox in the fable, because "she has had her own tail cut off," she wishes the same fate to all. Again, if the cause and interest of South Carolina are ours, why does the Council of her Nation sit with closed doors? Did any other Nation ever do the like before? and being novel in the history of Nations, it is calculated to arouse curiosity, if not suspicion—and as she has not made known the cause of such course, those who have the same cause and interest, must be allowed to entertain some concern, about this secret action. Therefore, because South Carolina, as we have reason to believe, has been actuated by self-interest, and acted in bad faith to the other States of the South—and her cause is not the common cause of the entire South; and because, she has not in my opinion, any right to secede, and if she has seeded for and on account of the causes *openly* avowed, has no just cause for revolution, and her action amounts to revolution: I am

unwilling to see the honest "Old North State" follow her lead. As she has precipitated herself into her present troubles and difficulties (scorning us as she ever has) without our counsel or assistance.

I say let her precipitate herself out of them as soon as she can, and I bid her God's speed. If South Carolina was right, I would be for her although no other State should espouse her cause; but if she is wrong, I am against her, although every other State except my own were for her. I am asked by the gentleman from Granville [Mr. Bullock] "If North Carolina goes out of the Union for present causes, will I follow her?" I answer that gentleman; Yes. Man is a gregarious animal, and this originated civil Liberty, for the enjoyment of which every man *implicitly* yields so much of his *personal* liberty, as is necessary for the good of society; and in pursuance to and compliance with this great fundamental rule governing civil Liberty I should feel bound to go with the majority of the people of my State, although I should believe they were wrong. I intend to do all in my power to prevent my fellow-citizens from taking a false step, and falling into difficulties, but if I fail—when they go, I will go—their cause is my cause, their interest mine, "where they go, I will go, where they die, I will die, and there will I be buried." Is that satisfactory to the gentleman? He manifests such a desire to know my opinions, I hope he intends to govern his course by them.

But suppose that the cause of South Carolina, is the cause of all the South, that we had been aggrieved by private individuals and States, then I ask have we not a Constitutional remedy guaranteed to us? Most assuredly, we have. I conceive this is no time to be actuated by motives of revenge or retaliation, but rather a time when every true man should act calmly and dispassionately—when he should exercise all his powers of conciliation, of Christian charity and brotherly love. When this is done, and we attempt in this manner, under the Constitution to settle our difficulties, we can do it.

Lastly, let us view this question, as one of loss and gain. What have we as a State, to gain, by dissolving this Union? I have listened patiently, for gentlemen, advocating a dissolution; to tell me, but I have listened in vain. There is, there can be, *nothing* to gain.

Will we recover the slaves that have at different times been enticed away from us by Abolition Emissaries, or their value? Surely not, by peaceable secession, and a revolution would cost fifty times as much as all the slaves that have run away, are worth. I doubt not, but that the sum appropriated for arming this State, would pay for twice as many as have been thus lost to the State. Will we gain security against all encroachments upon our slave property, and all abolition espionage, for the future? I think that in the midst of a revolution, our slaves would not only have better chances to leave us, but I fear they would leave our homes in ashes, and the dead bodies of our families, to bleach upon their native soil; and as for Emissaries, they would have free course, and risk not half as much as now. Even with a peaceable secession, how can we be advantaged in these particulars? Secession does not remove us any further from the North? We then will not have the power of the stars and stripes, to maintain our rights and redress our wrongs, in the Union; but with a single lone star, we shall have our own wrongs to redress, our own battles to fight, our own ammunition to buy, and at the same time our own families to support and our own victuals and clothing to furnish. And with all this, do we get our first wrongs redressed, our rights for the future, secured?

Do we gain any security against such raids in future, as that of John Brown? Their act was Treason, in the Union, and those concerned, were punished accordingly—now we have nothing to prevent from enforcing our laws, on all who shall think proper to follow the example of Brown, but if we secede, then such raids will be like the inroads of the Goths and Vandals or of the Highland clans of Scotland, and no such act will then be punished as Treason there will be no Constitution pronouncing it such. Then they will come in numbers, their name will be Legion and they will continue their lawless inroads upon us, until we shall be slaveless, penniless, and irretrievably ruined.

Will not the personal liberty laws, exist in the State?

North, after our Secession, as well as now, and will we of the South, have any more power, then, or half as much, to execute a Fugitive slave law, as we have now, in the Union? It cannot be.

Do we gain any thing by seceding on account of the Territorial differences? I ask, how many Territories are there, now, out of the Union? What is their Geographical position; and what are the natural laws which must of necessity decide the staple and productions of such Territories, and the kind of labor to be employed.

Does not every one know that, whatever might be the laws of the Government, under the Constitution, on the subject of slavery, this species of labor could never be made profitable in the few Territories, yet out of the Union? They are all too far North for the negro to thrive, and their soil is not adapted to the production of any staple which would demand or render it useful and profitable, the labour of the negro. Then why make such a noise about a mere abstract proposition if we secede for such cause, we thereby relinquish our right in all these Territories, and we get nothing, for they say it is to be a peaceable secession. On the other hand, I ask, what have we to loose? if we secede peaceably, then we give up forever, all our interest in the public Treasury, the public lands, the public Buildings, the Army and Navy, Arsenals, Dock Yards, and all things appertaining to the Government, all our guaranties for protection, for the maintenance of our rights, and the redress of our wrongs. And if this be true, secession is submission, and the secessionists are the real submissionists, whilst they apply that epithet to all those who will not follow in their wake and pander to their precipitate ideas and measures.

Besides this, even if we secede thus peaceably and thereby submit all our rights to our enemies, then we have to follow the example of South Carolina, we will be compelled to "set up for ourselves," to incur the expenses of forming a new Government, and all things necessarily accruing thereupon. All this will be extra from our regular expenses, and from the debt of ten or eleven millions, which we now owe. And if we secede, that act will necessarily affect our credit, as it has that of South Carolina, then our State bonds, instead of selling at twenty per cent discount, will not be worth a cent, our credit will be gone, our money expended, our debt unpaid, our responsibilities increasing every day, and we must inevitably, very soon be precipitated into the gulf of destruction. This will be our fate, if we pursue the peaceable course, and soon we would see our citizens leaving our State as those of South Carolina are leaving there.

But if we have a revolution, then in addition to all the above enumerated expenses and difficulties, we must also purchase Arms, ammunition, establish an Army and Navy, feed, clothe and pay our soldiers.—Have we the money to do this? if not have we credit upon which we may borrow it? if not, what will be our condition. Have we any Arms in the South or can we make them, or ammunition? We are dependent upon the Northern people for them. Does any man believe that the Yankees are fools enough to sell us Arms and ammunition, with which to blow out their brains? I know they love money, and that, doubtless, "the prevailing passion, would be strong in death," but I hardly believe that we could with confidence, expect to get the things needful.

Again, if we have to fight, where will be the battlefield? it must be in the Border States. Does any one suppose that with a war in our midst, we the Border States, can cultivate the soil and make the necessities of life, as we now do? Apart from these States, there is no portion of the South, where we can raise grain and make meat sufficient to supply our Southern demand. Then we must send to our Northern enemies for the daily necessities of life. Suppose they refuse us, as they certainly will, are we not at the mercy of our foes?

When we remember all, compare the loss with the gain, consider the causes which it is alleged are sufficient, to disturb our peace and involve us in an irreparable ruin—that we have no Constitutional right to secede, and if so, and that secession could be peaceable, even then secession will be submission, and it involves the inevitable ruin of giving up the rights and liberties

to submitting to the very wrongs which it is said, we have cause to secede. And when we remember that secession cannot, from the nature of the case, be peaceable, but must amount to revolution and that we have not just cause for revolution, having the Constitution of our fathers, under which we have so long and so happily lived, before our eyes, containing every guaranty that reasonable men should require, for the maintenance of all our rights, and for the redress of all our wrongs; how can we shut our eyes upon all these lights, bid farewell to the glorious memories of the past, to the Government of Liberty and Union, to the free institutions which have been so freely bequeathed to us to all that we hold near and dear upon Earth; and rush blindly and madly into this great abyss of ruin and annihilation. Forbid it my Countrymen! Forbid it I say! That the Southern people have been wronged, no one denies, and we should have Securities against such wrongs in future, but we can get this in the Union under the Constitution. Will not the propositions of Mr. Crittenden give us this security? No one denies it—and yet we see them defeated by the failure of six Southern Senators, to vote. Does this look like a desire on the part of the South, to be satisfied with their rights? It shows too palpably, to be mistaken, that the leaders of this secession move, are determined, as many of them had declared—not to accept of any compromise—but to dissolve the Union—ordis.—Will the conservative men of the South submit to this, and suffer themselves to be precipitated out of the Union?

The vote on the Crittenden resolutions, shows that there are conservative men in the North—numbers of them—who are willing to guaranty our rights. Now, when we refuse, how can the Gentlemen from Rockingham [Mr. Slade] declare "that the God of Liberty; of Nations of Justice and of mercy is on the side of the South." I believe sir, that the Conservative men North will pass these resolutions, in spite of the six defaulting Southern Senators, and when passed, I desire to see them added to the Constitution as a part of the same. Hence I introduced a resolution in this House, "to request the Legislature, or the several States in the Union, to join with us, in a request to Congress, that they call a National Convention, to amend the Constitution." That resolution sir, has been referred to the Committee on Federal Relations, and although requested respectfully by this House in the form of a resolution, to examine and report on the same, at an early day, yet it still slumbers in the bosom of the Committee.

The Gentleman from Rowan [Mr. Flemming] says he has no faith in a National Convention, and therefore does not see the necessity of consuming our time about it." But he gives no reason for his want of faith, and forgets that others do have faith in it, and that he is as liable to be mistaken about it as they. The Constitution declares, the manner in which Amendments thereto may be made, and by this, no Amendment can be proposed except by two thirds of both Houses or on the application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, to call a Convention which in either case, must be ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof. I think therefore, that in view of the probability of adjusting our difficulties no one who is really desirous of preserving the Union, ought to oppose or object to the calling of a National Convention. "We are told that we should secede before Lincoln gets possession of the Army and Navy that it will be much easier to take possession of them, now than then." I would like to know how, unless the President has been bribed not to do his duty: are not the Army and Navy and the Ports composed of the same men and have they not the same strength and power, now that they will have none. Lin. gin? Then if this be the cause urged for precipitation, why not wait.

Were such the case, I presume, that the bold people of the South, would not be disposed, then to show the white feather, and thus acknowledge, that they are afraid of Lincoln. But on the contrary, I undertake to say, that when a just cause for revolution is presented the people of the South, will not ask who is the President now, and who will be his successor, which one can we resist. We will not wait, until we are forced to do so.

ever have been, they will march forth, with one accord in a common cause, and they will

“Strike for the railroads and their fires;
Strike for the green graves of their sires;
God, and their native land.”

We find Gentlemen differing widely as to the course to be pursued after their secede. One is for a reconstruction of the Union, another is opposed—one says that the secession will be peaceable, another says it will be a revolution—one says we will give up all we have in public property of the Federal Government—another says we will have the last cent due us. The Secession leaders, seem to have not looked beyond secession—they have gone to the jumping off place, and then they launch upon an unknown sea. Will some one tell me who is right; and what is the real order of the day and the *modus operandi*? If you are attempting to dissolve the Union, for the purpose of a reconstruction, I pray you, bear in mind, that it is easy to destroy, but hard to create. The sturdy oak of the forest, which has been an hundred years in reaching its present dimensions, may in an hour, be felled to the earth by the woodman's axe. The man who has grown grey in deeds of charity and love, and thus established a character as a good man, may have it swept away in a day. The world has been endeavoring for centuries to establish a Government like this and prove the capacity of man for self-Government—but never before was it done.

Shall we the people of the Conservative State of North Carolina, launch forth upon this unknown sea—in a bad cause, with leaders who differ in policy, with the certainty that we have all to loose, and nothing to gain? Let the people answer and act for themselves—They propose forming a Southern Confederacy, and a Government like this. Can they make it better or stronger than this? If they do not feel bound by the present Constitution to be loyal thereto, and contend for the right of a State to secede from the this Union, and deny the right of the Government to enforce the laws under the Constitution against such seceding States. I say if they do this in the present Government, and under the present Constitution, what else can we expect from them in a Southern Confederacy, governed and administered by these very same men, with the restless, impulsive, fiery dispositions, which they drank in with their mother's milk, and which is ineradicably fixed in them for all time.

Can we expect that no differences will arise in this new Confederacy? Will there be no new Parties in it? There have been parties in all nations, throughout the history of the past? Then sir, as soon as one Party become dominant, and remained in power, as long as the Democratic Party have in this Union—and until they began to feel that they were the Lords of Creation, that no one had a right to rule, and a right to the spoils of office but them; and another Party entertaining different opinions and principles upon some abstract or practical question, shall obtain the ascendancy and ride into power, on those who had feasted so long upon fat things—just so soon would you find these same restless spirits, rising in their wrath, with a determination to “rule or ruin,” and then again we would hear of the right of secession and revolution. Gentlemen may talk about a Southern Confederacy, and picture to themselves, there, a Paradise on Earth; but in my humble opinion, if this Union of our fathers is broken up—if the ties, cemented by the common blood of a common ancestry, which have so long bound us together; be once broken, I much fear, that we may bid farewell to all free Institutions, the Bird of Liberty will spread his broad pinions to the breeze and bid a long, a last adieu to Earth, and “the golden Sun of Liberty will set forever, beneath the gloom of one eternal night.”

Mr. Chairman, if we of the South have been wronged by the General Government, let us as men, demand a redress of our wrongs—if we have not, then let us cease to cast blame upon her. If we have been wronged by Northern States or Northern men, let us seek redress in the manner that the Constitution provides.—And if we fail, let us rise up as one man, and have them, in the Union, under the Constitution, and without breaking up our Government. This can be done, and then the irrepressible crisis will be over, we will hear no more of nullification laws, of Abolition Emis-

saries—of slavery in the Territories,—of Brown Raids &c—but all will be peace and contentment—our Government will be established upon a firmer foundation than ever, and the—

“Stars and stripes will triumphantly wave
O'er the land of the free, the home of the brave.”

For these reasons, I am opposed to any act on the part of this State or of this General Assembly, which has the least tendency to secession, or rebellion, or revolution for existing causes; hence I am opposed to any Bill proposing to call a Convention of the people of the State, to consult about our Federal Relations, and take steps for withdrawing this State from the Union. Last summer when canvassing my County for a seat in this General Assembly, I expressed myself in favor of a Convention to amend the State Constitution in such a manner as to equalize taxation, and I am in favor of it yet. But in this crisis, knowing that if a Convention be called, it will exercise a power to consider the doctrine of secession, and being of the opinion, that such Convention would act upon that question alone, and leave our State constitution unamended. In fine, believing as I do, that we could not get the desired amendments without getting secession, at the same time I and my people prefer to do without both rather than, have both. We are not Secessionists.

Therefore I shall give my vote against a Convention, confidently believing that an honest and patriotic constituency will sustain me therein.

It is said that those who oppose the call of a Convention are afraid to trust the people. To such a charge I answer, that I for one, am not afraid of them. I know them well. I know that they are honest, intelligent, patriotic and just, and could they have the power to speak truly their own sentiments, I am satisfied that they would speak in tones of thunder, which would be heard above the mad cry of the disturbers of our peace, in behalf of the Union, the Constitution and the Enforcement of the Laws. But whilst I am not afraid to trust the people, I must honestly confess that I am afraid to trust disunion politicians. I know their ability, their numbers, their influence and their dogged determination to dissolve this Union; and I fear that if a Convention be called there will be a majority of them in that Convention, contrary to the wishes of the people, and I, for one, am afraid to trust the peace and interest of my State in their hands.

It has been said on this floor, by Gentlemen, on the other side of this question, that the opposers of this bill, in all their speeches, endeavored to aggravate and exaggerate the difficulties and consequences of revolution and to palliate the wrongs committed by the North. If I have not, in the foregoing remarks, sufficiently repelled this charge, I will say now, once, for all that the effects of a revolution or of secession, which I have portrayed as being the consequences of such a course, are in my opinion correct and not exaggerated. My conclusions, I think, have been deduced from reasoning upon correct premises—upon facts which have not and cannot be controverted. “Truth is mighty and will prevail,” and if it hurts any one or any party—it is their misfortune and not my fault. Furthermore, I repeat again, that I do not deny, justify or palliate the wrongs which we of the South have suffered at the hands of Northern men, or States. I condemn them all, and say that they have been sufficient to arouse and kindle the spirit of every Southern man and that they ought to be punished; and we ought to have security against the commission of them in all time to come. But I do say that they offered no just cause for revolution, because we have a remedy under the Constitution, that they do not justify us in leaving the land of our fathers, and the glorious heritage they bequeathed; for we can settle them in the Union. They ought to be settled now, and settled forever, but there is a right way to do it.

The Gentleman from Lincoln [Mr. Hoke] says that it will be no Treason for us to fight against the Black Republicans, I admit the assertion of the Gentleman, and as a Southern man, born in the South, educated in the South, in my attachment to the South and her Institutions, and to see her have her rights under the Constitution, yield to no man—am willing to go as far, toil as much as any other man to allay the sectional feeling, which has been originated upon the slavery question, and strengthened by the promotion of the Re-

publican Party—and if the times should ever come when the people of this Union shall be driven to the necessity of fighting for the South or for Republicans I shall be ready and willing to shoulder my musket and lend my feeble aid to the South and the maintenance of Southern rights and Southern Institutions.

But the Gentleman endeavors to confound the question, to create the impression that our present contest is with the Republican Party. The Constitution of this Country—as I have said before recognises no Party.—Secessionists seem persist in the idea, that this is a question between the North and South. If it is, then I ask how, in reason, can they advocate the right of secession or revolution? If the Constitution has been violated by the Republican Party, and thereby, Southern rights have been trampled upon, how can Gentlemen get around admitting that for this, there is a Constitutional remedy? And if there be a Constitutional remedy, then there can be no just cause for secession or revolution. It must be acknowledged by every sensible man, that there can be no just cause for revolution, but the failure on the part of the Gen'l Government, to administer the Constitution impartially and according to the spirit thereof. And although a Party in the Government may have set at defiance the laws of the same, yet that act of theirs does not render guilty, the Government against which this rebellion has been made, but is a matter between itself and the rebellious Party, and a matter which should be treated as rebellion, by the Government. The rebellion of a Party, cannot be considered as the crime of Government, and gentlemen need not try to shift the *guilt* of such a Party upon the Government, for the purpose of accomplishing their dangerous purposes. They know, sir, that unless they can lay guilt at the door of the Federal Government, they cannot with any reason, logic or sophistry, justify their action in the eyes of God or man.

Whilst I am willing to follow North Carolina—for the reasons heretofore assigned—whether she be right or wrong; yet I hope never to see her go out of this Union to follow the Cotton States. The same restless spirit which has precipitated South Carolina out of the Union into all her miseries, would in a short time cause her to distract a Southern Confederacy. They are descendants of the French—a people proverbial the world over for their versatility, instability and love of revolution, and if the present Union falls, I hope never to be linked to her again.

But in such an event I desire to see New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri, stand together under the Government of our fathers, under the same Constitution and laws, and we will be the freest the happiest people “on this side of Heaven.”

Then my word for it, the time will not be far distant, when revolution North and South, shall have worked out their ends, the remainder of the thirty three States, or sisters, who like the Prodigal Son, shall have wandered into strange lands, and spent their substance in riotous living, and have been fain to feed upon the husks of swine—shall come to themselves, and shall remember that in the Government of their fathers, there is peace and plenty, and bread enough for all and they will arise and go to their father's Government, and ask to be received back again.

That will be a proud day for North Carolina and her sister Border States. Then they will see these their Sisters, coming in the distance, and go to meet them when afar off—and like the Patriarch of old, will receive them back again, with outstretched arms exclaiming these our sisters, have been lost, but now are found and will welcome them once more “To their own green land forever—

Land of the beautiful and brave,
The freeman's home, the martyr's grave”

Then in view of all, with no cause to justify us in a revolution, and with no right to go out otherwise—having never been aggrieved, by the Federal Government against which, all the wrongs cited as justifiable cause, are alleged; and if so, having never demanded our rights or a redress of these wrongs; and with the security and safe guaranty, that we will get our rights and have our wrongs redressed as soon and as often as demanded—with nothing to gain and all to lose by going out of the Union, whether we go out by secession, by rebellion or by revolution—whether we go now or under the administration of some other President—with all the dread of forced loans and high taxes staring us in the face on every side, with all the horrors of civil war before us with the strong hope that by remaining quiet, by watching and waiting awhile, we may preserve this glorious Union, or if not, that when once dissolved, we may be the means of re-constructing it; in view of all this, let me call upon one and all, whatever may have been heretofore their party affiliations, whatever may be the fears they may entertain about our safety, and whatever doubts they may entertain as to what is best to be done in this trying emergency; I call upon all, by the sacred memories of the Past, by the common tie which has so long bound us together, in the name of all that we hold near and dear on Earth, in the name of posterity which will rise up to call us blessed, or to curse our memories, according as we shall act in this crisis; in the name of that Divinity which shaped the ends of our fathers and will shape ours; let us rally around the stars and stripes, let us as a bold independent people rise in our majesty, demand our rights, in the Union, under the Constitution, in the manner therein provided; then, in my opinion we will get them, and a sure and safer guaranty for them throughout all coming time. But let us never submit, that the North shall drive us out of the Union, either by force or by policy, and thus deprive us of our heritage and thus bring dishonour upon our names, upon our memories when we are gone, and upon our posterity which is to live after us.

We did not precipitate ourselves into this Union, but we waited our two years to see the working of this new Government. When we became satisfied that it was the Government we needed and desired, then we entered into it. We had no difficulty in being received, on account of our delay, but on the contrary, by that very act, established a character, among the Sister States of this Union for caution, prudence and deliberation, which has adhered to us to this day, and which has been truly maintained and supported by all our acts from that day to this. And, now, the States of this Union, the nations of Earth are looking with the deepest anxiety and concern to the action of Conservative, cautious, prudent North Carolina, and are hanging breathless upon our movements.

As to the question of coercion, we would simply say, that any attempt on the part of the Federal Government to coerce a seceding State, would be impolitic and unwise, and tend to widen the breach between the North and the South, and perhaps, to dissolve the Union. If the Union is dissolved, and a Southern Confederacy is formed, let us not be concerned, let us not be precipitated or precipitate, for we can very easily be taken in, admitted with full privileges, at any time we shall desire. Let us follow the cautious and worthy example of our fathers, and as long as the present Government will protect and defend us, let us stick to it. When it fails so to do, then let us look to find one that will, and if we can find none, then let us “set up for ourselves” and may God give us a true deliverance, a free Government, and a peaceful, quiet, happy home.